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27 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Strategic Research
SUBJECT : Comments on Scenarios for Navy Study on
Western Pacific and Indian Ocean Bases

1. Following are a few broad observations and some specific comments and questions on the three draft scenarios proposed as the basis for the Navy study.

General Observations

2. To attempt to forecast the behavior and policies of more than 20 nations over the next 13 years with any degree of certainty is, of course, a risky business. One need only consider what might have been forecast in 1954 regarding friendly and enemy national postures in 1967. Would an estimator then have foreseen a shift from militancy to "peaceful coexistence" on the part of the USSR? Or a nearly complete rift between the USSR and Communist China? Or the nature and seriousness of the war in Vietnam? Or Castro's takeover in Cuba? Or a lot of other developments which have radically altered alignments among nations? Certainly in the next 13 years drastic changes will take place, perhaps ever more sweeping than those of the last 13, which will further alter world relationships.

3. Nevertheless, it is understood that the Navy (and the other services) need some basis for long-range planning. In being so, the approach taken in the subject study (i.e., various projections of the world relationships 1970-80) seems the only feasible one. There are two

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other projections--at opposite extremes of the spectrum--beyond the three posited in the Navy study which might warrant examination. None of the three scenarios takes account of the possibility of a World War III or a Sino-Soviet military confrontation occurring before or during 1970-80. Nor do they consider the possibility that the world's big powers (China included) reach agreement on total disarmament to be achieved over a period of years. Perhaps these two additional scenarios are not appropriate for the purpose at hand.

4. It would be more realistic for planning purposes if the projections of world relationships extended for shorter periods of time--say for five years--and be revised and extended annually as developments warranted. It is quite likely that a 13-year projection made at this time is going to have to be changed at intervals anyway as world developments dictate. Would it not be better to start with the shorter range view?

Some Specific Points

5. In studying the three scenarios presented in the Navy study, the most striking aspect is the treatment accorded the USSR. Soviet interests are not wholly ignored, but they are mentioned rather infrequently and usually secondarily to those of China. The USSR is, after all, a considerable power to be reckoned with in the Western Pacific and probably will be even more so in the future. Moreover, the USSR is in a position to apply substantial economic and political leverage in some of the non-Communist nations of the Pacific. Moscow's interests in the Indian Ocean and the bordering states have been growing and will continue to do so, and the Soviets have been building up their influence in some of these states. Deeper consideration of the Soviet interest and power position in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean areas would seem to be in order.

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6. In each of the three scenarios the anticipated behavior or alignments of the various free nations are stated more or less as assumptions or indisputable fact. There is little explanation in the scenarios as to why some of the countries are expected to behave as stated. Perhaps a useful approach to analyzing the future policies of all of these countries would be to assess them in light of their abilities to afford shifting away from co-operation with the US (i.e., what would be the consequences for them if they were to do so?)

Scenario A

7. In scenario A it is supposed that China "remains active" in promoting wars of National Liberation. One is inclined to suggest "is more effective" in place of "remains active." At present China pursues this policy largely by propaganda, which has not been notably effective. It is also said that China and the USSR will undertake separate but parallel action to bring Africa and Asia under Communist rule. Does this mean that this will be accomplished by military action, i.e., military conquest? If not, what is the relevance of all the subsequent discussion of bases for the UK and availability? In the same scenario under Southeast Asia, the reference to "present pace (April 1967)" is puzzling. Was this scenario written last April? If so it should be modernized since the pace of the Vietnam war has quickened. Further, there is now no hope that either Peking or Moscow will exercise a moderating influence over Hanoi.

8. Under Thailand there is reference to insurgents. Are these to be Chinese? Do they come by way of Laos or Burma? The ethnic makeup of any insurgent group would have a lot to do with its effectiveness. One puzzles as to why the further assurance given Thailand that the US will not initiate nuclear war against China is a part of a

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pessimistic scenario. If one were to construct a "pessimistic" scenario, one could paint Japan in far less cooperative light than is done here.

9. The treatment of Malaysia and Singapore raises some questions. Why would Australia deploy forces to Malaysia and Singapore? In a pessimistic scenario one should assume that both within ten years would be Communist-ruled and not cooperative with the US and Australia.

10. The posited pressure on India would be likely to produce a result opposite of that described. "Maximum pressure" to keep India non-aligned would be likely to align her. The following sentence regarding what the USSR and China would do is hardly pressure. Suggest, that instead of "pressure" the word "tactics" or "efforts" be substituted. What is meant by "pursuing a diplomatic strategy oriented toward development of Islamic resistance to Communism?" It is unlikely that religion will be more a factor than it is now. It would be both optimistic and unrealistic, in any case, to suppose that Pakistan will worry more about Communism than about India and Kashmir.

Scenario B

11. Mainland China has yet to pursue an expansionist foreign policy, and "begins" might more accurately be substituted for "continues."

12. Reference is made to Indian assistance to the "African liberation movement." The use of this term is as puzzling as the prospect of Indian assistance to it. Is this to be prevented or encouraged?

Scenario C

13. In general, the direct, and apparently causal, relationship between a less aggressive China and a reduced US presence in this area seems somewhat oversimplified.

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Chief Special Staff
Office of Current Intelligence